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## Stimulus money to pay for repaving of Ankeny Boulevard

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Most of the estimated \$1.4 million cost to repave Ankeny Boulevard between First Street and Oralabor Road is expected to be paid for through the federal economic stimulus package.

Ankeny Public Works Director Paul Moritz said the package includes \$1 million toward the Ankeny Boulevard work. The remaining \$430,000 will come from an award by the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, he said.

Since Ankeny Boulevard is a portion of U.S. Highway 69, it is maintained by the Iowa Department of Transportation. The street's heavy traffic load helped push the repaving project to the forefront when city officials were looking for a project that would fit the criteria of the economic stimulus bill.

"The need to repave this particular road is obvious if you drive it. It needs repairs at the south end - the pavement just north of Oralabor has deteriorated to the point where something needs to be done," Moritz said. "In fact, the whole highway up to First Street has aged and the DOT has been maintaining it as best as possible."

The work will be bid out in June with a late summer or early fall construction start date, he said.

"Because this project only calls for an overlay, it can be designed quickly and can be bid within 180 days, which is a requirement. This particular project doesn't have any right-of-way issues or any environmental issues," Moritz said. "It's a quicker turnaround project where we don't have to buy anybody's property and it can be completed within the existing right of way."

Moritz said officials don't expect to need detours to complete the work.

"We won't be rerouting traffic, but likely will narrow traffic down to one lane on each side while we pave. There will be some patching involved, probably first the median, curb and intake repairs, then we'll do the actual overlay one half at a time and run traffic control in each lane. We are limited to what we can do with this project, as it follows the economic stimulus bill requirements."

Tony Gustafson, assistant District I engineer with the Iowa Department of Transportation, said that most of the projects put forth by metro-area cities under the economic stimulus bill are asphalt overlay or concrete inlay projects.

"Oralabor up to First Street carries a lot of traffic and this is a good investment," Gustafson said. "The road from Oralabor up to First Street is the original paving and it was constructed in the mid- to late 1960s."

Gustafson said that there might be more reconstruction projects done to this stretch of road in anticipation of the high school planned for the Prairie Trail development.

"There may be a need for some intersection improvements in the next year or two, possibly some turning lanes," he said.

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